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Israel

Secretary of State Baker's remarks to the House Foreign Affairs Committee caused "great apprehension" in Jerusalem, YEDI'OT AHARONOT reported. In their upcoming meeting, the envoy to Washington will tell Baker that funds obtained from the loan guarantees will not be used in the territories, the paper continued. Meanwhile, "cautious optimism" on eventually receiving the guarantees is prevailing, Jerusalem television reported.

Algeria

"Adventurers" at Friday prayer sermons should not urge citizens to join marches "aimed at provoking the security forces and at defying the state's authority," a Ministry of Interior and Local Communities statement broadcast by Algiers television warned. The foreign minister told a Beirut paper that "the prospect of a civil war is over," according to Algiers radio, which also broadcast details of a 13-hour meeting between Islamic Salvation Front leaders and the former head of government and his interior minister. Three-day clashes in Batna left 15 people dead and 66 injured, the radio added.

Egypt

The State Council's Administrative Causes Court upheld the ban on activities of the Muslim Brotherhood, stating that the original 1954 decision should not be appealed, MENA reported.

Lebanon

The foreign minister told the London paper AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that "Lebanon will participate" in talks with Israel set for 24 February in Washington, noting that nonparticipation in the multilateral phase does not rule out a role in the bilaterals.

Iraq

The interior minister is in full charge of the investigation into a November 1991 theft from warehouses belonging to the electronic industries, BABIL reported.

Sudan

"Informed Sudanese sources" told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that 41 officers, mostly from the Air Force, were arrested on charges of planning to bomb a meeting of the Revolution Command Council. The sources were unable to confirm whether the officers had been executed, the paper continued.

Morocco

King Hassan II, in an interview with REUTER cited by MAP, called for a referendum on the Western Sahara to take place "as soon as possible," possibly in May or June, adding "I am committed to the referendum." Hassan additionally called for national legislative elections following the referendum, the agency continued, possibly in time to have a new parliament in October.

Pakistan

"Defense sources in Islamabad" said another 40,000 troops have been deployed along the Line of Control in Kashmir, bringing the total to 325,000, Delhi radio reported. A Pakistani Foreign Office spokesman, meanwhile, said that a plan by the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front to cross the line does not have the support of the government, Islamabad radio added.

India

Security forces are on the alert in Kashmir despite Pakistani assurances that an attempt to cross the Line of Control will be contained, the minister of state for home affairs told PTI in an interview reported by Delhi radio. The government asked the UN Security Council to intercede with Pakistan on the planned march, according to the radio, which added details of the foreign secretary's briefing to ambassadors of Security Council countries.

Afghanistan

Pakistani-based faction leaders rejected the idea of a UN-sponsored plan for a coalition government that would include the former king and the current president, spokesmen told THE PAKISTAN TIMES.

Palestinian Affairs

PLO's al-Najjab Discusses Partition, Refugees

TA0502205992 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 5 Feb 92 p 13

[Interview with Sulayman al-Najjab, member of the PLO Executive Committee, by Dan Avidan in Moscow; date not given]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Avidan] How did recent developments in the Soviet Union and the collapse of communism affect your party, the Palestinian People's Party?

[Al-Najjab] Your question has broad ideological aspects and requires more time than we have. Briefly, I would say that our political position has not been altered in the wake of the changes in the Soviet Union. Our political position and our struggle are for the sake of finding a just solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and securing the rights of the Palestinian people—and this is now the PLO's platform. At the core of this position is the Palestinian peace initiative embraced by the Palestine National Council in 1988, and we remain loyal to this initiative and platform. The changes in the Soviet Union will not affect the PLO's platform.

[Avidan] What is your party's attitude toward Israel? Are you prepared to recognize Israel if it pulls out of the territories?

[Al-Najjab] We are the only Palestinian party that has since 1947 accepted the UN resolution on partition, which mentions the establishment of two states for two peoples living on the land of Palestine (Eretz Yisra'el). Events have proved our position right, and there is no need to change it. It is important that peace-seeking Israeli forces should adhere to this platform, because there is no other solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and there is no chance of genuine cooperation between the Palestinian, Israeli, and Arab peoples other than through recognition of the principle of two states for two peoples on Palestine's soil.

[Avidan] Do you think Israel will agree to withdraw to the boundaries of the partition plan?

[Al-Najjab] We demand an Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967 in accordance with UN Resolution 242.

[Avidan] And if that materializes, will you agree to sign a peace treaty with Israel?

[Al-Najjab] When Israel recognizes our rights and our state and when a full Israeli withdrawal takes place, we will be willing to sign all the agreements to that effect.

[Avidan] Are you willing to accept a pragmatic solution of the refugee problem and not demand their return to their homes?

[Al-Najjab] In our opinion, the refugee question will be solved according to the UN resolutions, which state that the refugees are entitled either to return to their homes or to receive compensation. We will discuss this issue in the context of a comprehensive arrangement.

[Avidan] Do you think this is a pragmatic approach to the solution of the refugee problem?

[Al-Najjab] We believe the basis for the solution of our complex problems and for securing our rights lies in the pertinent UN resolutions.

[Avidan] But some UN resolutions actually are an indirect formula for the annihilation of Israel.

[Al-Najjab] It seems to me you are still under the effect of the notions that dominated Arab thought in the past. Israeli leaders used to resort to Arab declarations about the need to liberate all the Palestinian land, etc. (to justify their policy). This Arab slogan does not exist anymore, however, and all the Palestinians are committed to a clear platform that talks about the existence of two states for two peoples on the land of Palestine (Eretz Yisra'el). Israel's rulers are now looking for new excuses (to avoid peace), and they argue that the solution of the refugee problem will bring about Israel's annihilation—but those claims are not true.

Moreover, I do not see much logic in Israel's policy. On the one hand, the government absorbs hundreds of thousands of new immigrants thinking there is room to settle them, but fails to see the danger these immigrants pose to the Palestinians on the land of their forefathers. On the other hand, the government is afraid of the UN resolution that proposes two options for a solution of the refugee problem. I fail to see the logic of such a position if we want to find an arrangement that will serve the interests of all the sides.

[Avidan] To sum up, do you think there is a historic opportunity today to attain a peace arrangement between Israel and the Arabs?

[Al-Najjab] Yes, and Israel's leaders should not miss it.

Algeria

Government Says to 'Fight Hard' Against Disorder

LD0602195992 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Here now is this statement from the Ministry of Interior and Local Communities:

At a time when the great majority of the people have expressed their satisfaction at the recent measures taken by the public authorities to guarantee social security and safety, and the security of property and persons, public opinion is once again being subjected to intolerant pressures and to incitements emanating from those who do not like public order and who are annoyed by the return of respect for the state's authority.

The measures taken, and severely applied, to keep places of worship far from partisan conflicts, have become an excuse exploited by some to incite public opinion and mislead citizens. Information received has indicated to us that disturbances might therefore take place in the capital and in other regions. The occasion will be an exploitation of Friday prayers to incite worshipers and children to join marches aimed at provoking the security forces and at defying the state's authority—and going as far as to use firearms at times.

The Ministry of Interior and Local Communities reiterates the determination of public authorities to fight hard, within the framework of the law, to safeguard public security. The Interior Ministry warns citizens, parents, and worshipers of the dangers that might be caused by some of the adventurers, who will use their emotions and despair to lead them into an adventure fraught with danger.

Here ends the statement of the Ministry of Interior and Local Communities.

Brahimi Says Possibility of 'Civil War Is Over'

LD0702121592 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] The Lebanese paper AL-DIYAR today published the contents of an interview it conducted with Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi on the fringes of the Nonaligned Movement Ministerial Committee in Cyprus. Among what Brahimi told AL-DIYAR is the following: As for the possibility of the Lebanonization [Labnanati] of Algeria, Brahimi stated that the prospect of a civil war is over, and we are sure that we have managed to overcome it. In Brahimi's view, for a civil war to erupt the people would have to split and take up arms against one another. This phenomenon has not happened in Algeria, and he did not believe there is room for comparing the situation in Lebanon to that of Algeria.

The situation in Algeria is different because the state is trying to impose its authority. There are those who carry out unacceptable acts; therefore, measures are applied against them as there is no other solution. This is part of the interview given by our foreign minister to the Lebanese paper AL-DIYAR and published today.

FIS: Clashes 'Can Only Be Settled' by Elections

NC0602181892 Paris AFP in English 1734 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Algiers, Feb 6 (AFP)—The fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) said Thursday that Algeria's political crisis can only be settled at the ballot box.

The FIS, in a statement to AFP, said the "only solution to the political crisis" lay in the "continuation of the electoral process." That came to an abrupt end when the second round of voting was canceled as the FIS was poised to sweep to victory on its platform of turning Algeria into an Islamic state.

The voting last month was canceled by the military-backed High State Council which took control of the country after the resignation of President Chadli Bendjedid.

The FIS made its appeal following clashes between security forces and Muslim demonstrators in the eastern city of Batna.

Police said 12 people have died, 66 have been wounded and 15 arrested since the start of the fighting. The FIS says 20 have died and dozens have been wounded.

The Algerian news agency reported that the situation was calming down late Thursday.

Further Reportage on Batna Unrest, Casualties

8 Killed; Tedjini Haddam Returns to Paris

LD0602144592 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Excerpts] Clashes are continuing in Batna, the town in the east of the country where very violent clashes have been taking place for the last two days between sympathizers of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] and the security forces. This morning the authorities were saying that they were in control of the situation. Yesterday the official radio station reported eight dead and 50 injured, but this morning the FIS announced that the clashes are continuing and that in fact 16 people have been killed. [passage omitted]

I would add that yesterday seven Islamists were sentenced to terms of between three and seven months in prison by the Constantine court. [passage omitted]

Finally, a last piece of news on Algeria: Cheikh Tedjini Haddam, the rector of the Paris Mosque who became one of the five members of the Algerian Higher State Council, has returned to Paris, I quote, to continue his usual duties as the head of the Muslim Institute of the Paris Mosque.

12 Killed, 66 Injured, 15 Arrested

LD0602192192 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] A report carried by APS says that calm has gradually begun to return to the town of Batna, which has experienced abnormal disturbances for the past three days.

According to sources of the national gendarmerie services, about 15 people were detained and 12 people have died since the start of the violence. Another 66 people have been injured.

Algiers Forces Deploy, Surround Ben Badis Mosque

LD0702102992 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] The radio station's outside broadcast team today noticed a heavy deployment of the Army and the gendarmerie in the el-Harrach, Djenane Mabrouk, and Kouba quarters of Algiers.

The same team reports that the Ben Badis Mosque in Kouba is besieged and that it is believed that prayers there will be canceled.

FIS, Hamrouche Hold 'Closed-Door' Meeting

LD0602204192 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] According to APS it has been learned from knowledgeable sources that last night's meeting between the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] leaders and the former head of government [Hamrouche] and his interior minister lasted for 13 hours, and was very beneficial.

The closed-door meeting was held at the Blida military court in the presence of 21 lawyers and dealt with all the factors characterizing the situation since the time of the FIS strike up to the announcement of the state of siege.

The same source said it is possible that more witnesses will be called.

'Confrontation' Over FIS Leaders' Arrest

LD0702075992 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] Information leaked out yesterday concerning the confrontation which took place between the Islamic Salvation Front leaders and the former head of government, Mouloud Hamrouche, and his interior minister, Mohamed Salah Mohamedi, at the Blida military court two days ago.

A lawyer for the FIS leaders disclosed to APS that the confrontation lasted 13 hours and was beneficial in pushing forward the investigation and showing the truth in the case of the FIS leaders who were arrested after last June's incidents.

The same source said that the confrontation took place in two phases: between Mr. Abassi Medani and the former head of government, and between Abassi and the former interior minister, Mohamed Salah Mohamedi; Mr. Ali Belhadj was not involved in this confrontation. The latter dealt with all the elements from the start of the FIS strike to the announcement of the state of siege, as the FIS lawyer said. He also affirmed that other witnesses might be asked to appear before the examining magistrate at the Blida military court.

It was learned from a reliable source that the arrested FIS leaders addressed a letter to the examining magistrate which requested the summoning of some witnesses, among them the head of government, Mr. Sid Ahmed Ghozali; and Ahmed Ben Bella, Kasdi Merbah, and Louisa Hanoun.

Workers Party Applauds Socialist Front's Proposal

LD0602165592 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1600 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] The Workers Party has responded positively to the proposal of the national council of the FFS [Socialist Forces Front], which has called for the organization of a national referendum to set up an interim government and a neutral and an impartial administration to handle current business, prepare the election of a constituent national assembly, and set the agenda for presidential and general elections under the best possible conditions.

Commentary Says Foreign Interference Not Tolerated

LD0602215692 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] What is noticeable in Mohamed Boudiaf's [3 February] television interview concerning Algeria's relations with Arab, Islamic, and other countries is the emphatic and determined rejection of the logic of a truce with and tolerance of countries which allow themselves to intervene in our internal affairs. The message was clear to anyone who thinks that the domestic situation in Algeria could be exploited without Algeria paying back matters twofold.

If Algeria needs sincere cooperation relations with the Arab brothers in particular, this must be done from the point of view of Arab brotherhood, for despite its ordeals, Algeria still retains geopolitical weight and international influence on account of the acclaimed historical capital in its possession and the capabilities which give it a leading role in the Third World.

Egypt

Mubarak on Economic Issues, Liberalization

NC0702050892 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2105 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, 6 Feb (MENA)—According to President Husni Mubarak, the government is about to complete the process of selecting general assembly members for the 26 holding companies. He said the names will be announced soon, and then the formation of boards of directors and general assemblies for the productive units and boards of directors of the affiliated companies will begin, to be completed by the end of this month.

He denied that the measures required to liberalize the public sector are lax, and said people should be chosen with absolute care based on competence and honesty.

In an interview with AL-AHRAM to be published Friday, the president said that in the next phase, holding and affiliated companies' stocks will be assessed to determine the value of their shares so they may be issued and dealt with on the market.

He added that this shows we are executing our work more rapidly than many abroad believe. When World Bank officials learned of the work being done during their recent visit, we became certain that our situation is progressing along a specific timetable.

The president said that the first stage of the economic program has neared completion. This stage, he added, is that of determining monetary, financial, and trade policies and the exchange rate. The entire commodity list is expected to be canceled. We have now begun the second stage, during which agricultural prices, except for cotton, will be liberalized according to supply and demand. The cotton price, he said, will reach the international level in 1995, after it reaches 66.5 percent of the international price next year, and the same applies to sugar cane.

He noted that the government is putting its investments up for sale, and that three companies have thus far been evaluated. Their shares will be put up for sale before April. The government also announced the beginning of registration for consortiums to evaluate the rest of the 26 companies whose shares will be put up for sale. These companies represent a huge amount of investment.

Commenting on reports about a rise in the price of medicine, the president pointed out that the medicine industry is the only one whose production is subject to pricing. The problem is simply that medical companies' prices must cover production costs, and the cost of most of the imported raw material rises monthly. He said: When we prevented these companies from raising their prices, more than half of them asked to cease operation. This would cause a shortage of medicine and laying off thousands of workers. Medicine prices in Egypt remain cheaper than those abroad.

Speaking about the social fund and what is expected from it, the president noted this fund was established, with help from friends, to raise money from outside Egypt to relieve the unemployment problem. He said the fund was designed to operate in two ways: First, to provide loans to help people find jobs; and second, to finance infrastructure projects, such as cleaning canals and building schools, etc.

He said: So far, we have raised about 1.8 billion [Egyptian] pounds. The government has informed me it has procured the necessary funds for three fundamental loan projects with the aim of creating new jobs, and that businessmen's associations in Cairo and Alexandria are contributing to these projects.

He added: The fund now has three projects on line to create 60,000 to 70,000 jobs. The number of new jobs required each year is almost half a million. We should look for labor-intensive areas in which new jobs can be found—an arduous effort.

President Mubarak said he was pleased with the common language he sensed between the government and businessmen on increasing export opportunities and production. He noted that the picture is changing and providing hope for a better future, God willing. The government, he said, does not hesitate in solving problems. The point is that anything can be resolved through discussion and dialogue, rather than shouting and (?tension). He emphasized that there no longer is discrimination between the public and private sectors and that the law stipulates that neither of the two should bear the other's burdens.

The president commented on rumors about excessive government spending. He said: The state budget proves that these claims are untrue. If we exclude wages, pensions, subsidies, investments, and debt installments, what remains for spending on the state's activities in all ministries and governorates will not exceed 1.2 billion pounds, 360 million of which are cleaning expenditures [not further specified].

The president noted that those who believe better performance and accomplishments will not come without changing the government are oversimplifying matters, because ever-increasing problems are not solved by changing people, but by seriously studying and creating favorable financial circumstances for investment, foremost of which is the completion of the infrastructure.

The president asserted that the world's confidence in Egypt has increased and that this was made clear in the appointment of 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid as Arab League secretary general and Dr. Butrus Ghali as UN secretary general.

He said confidence in Egypt is becoming stronger, and proof of this is that Egypt almost daily receives offers to deposit billions of dollars in Egyptian banks.

President Mubarak said his post is in a state of almost constant emergency to deal with the consecutive problems and continuous challenges. He added: This is my destiny, which I accept and do not regret.

Court Upholds Ban on Muslim Brotherhood

NC0702051692 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1530 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, 6 Feb (MENA)—The State Council's Administrative Causes Court today rejected the lawsuit submitted by Hamid Abu-al-Nasr, in his capacity as general guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, in which he asked for permission for the group to resume activities.

The court said in its ruling that the Revolutionary Council's 1954 decision dissolving the Muslim Brotherhood was correct and enjoys constitutional immunity, which should not be appealed or contested. It added that the administrative authority is under no obligation to issue a decision permitting the group to resume its activities.

Sidqi Discusses Cooperation With Libyan Official

NC0602141092 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1257 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, 6 Feb (MENA)—Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi received Muhammad Mahmud al-Hijazi, Libyan secretary for integration with the Arab Republic of Egypt, at his office today.

Following the meeting, al-Hijazi said that he and Dr. Sidqi discussed preparations for the second meeting of the Higher Joint Egyptian-Libyan Committee, scheduled to be held in Cairo on 25-26 February. Sidqi and his Libyan counterpart, Abu-Zayd 'Umar, will chair the meeting.

Al-Hijazi said that a preparatory committee of experts will meet on 23-24 February to discuss arrangements.

The Libyan secretary praised the accomplishments made in the industrial, agricultural, cultural, transportation, and oil-related areas since the first committee meeting last year. He said that the Higher Committee will examine new proposals to enhance bilateral economic relations.

Al-Hijazi added that private-sector trade totaled 1.25 billion Egyptian pounds last year, noting that trade can be increased even more if certain trade barriers are removed.

Ibrahim al-Sharif, director of the Libyan follow-up office in Cairo, and Ministers Hamdi Nada and 'Abd-al-Mun'im Sa'udi, advisers to the prime minister, also attended the meeting.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Praises Striking Lawyers, Judges

LD0602113192 Tripoli JANA in English 0847 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Tripoli, al-Nawwar [February] 6, JAMAHARIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The leader of the revolution Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi addressed the following message to the Arab lawyers and judges who observed a general strike—including a hunger strike—in solidarity with the Great Jamahariyah against the new colonialist campaign.

To the lawyers and judges:

Through this unique stance you really express the conscience of humanity and repudiate the violation of law and the miscarriage of justice and you refuse the death of the United Nations which was united following the universal tragedy in the Second World War.

You also refuse to consign it to the same fate as the League of Nations and the transfer of the international Security Council into a criminal tribunal or a regional council favouring a limited number of states.

Through this stance the Arab lawyers honour the Arab nation and [word indistinct] of the through this strike it announces that it is the [words indistinct] United Nations Charter, [words indistinct] international law and the sovereignty of the people, and the rejection of its subjugation and the imposition of the will of [word indistinct] nations on smaller ones through the use of force.

Through this action you reaffirm that nations have united in this organisation to [word indistinct] protection from the tyranny, colonisation and oppression which the superpowers attempt to impose, once again, on the world.

Despite your continued suffering from hunger the people applaud and glorify you. The [words indistinct] the world salute you.

[signed] Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi

Kurdish Movement Condemns UN Resolution

LD0602192892 Tripoli JANA in English 1745 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Kurdistan, al-Nawwar [February] 6, JAMAHARIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The Revolutionary Committees for the Liberation of Kurdistan movement condemned Security Council Resolution No. 731 and confirmed that it constitutes a serious precedent in the history of the Council and the United Nations.

In its solidarity statement with the Great Jamahariyah the Revolutionary Committees for the Liberation of Kurdistan indicated that imperialism wants to impose its domination on the weakened nations by putting pressure on the Security Council to issue false resolutions.

Arab Atomic Energy Council Issues Recommendations

LD0602161992 Tripoli JANA in English 1441 GMT 6 Feb 91

[Text] Tripoli, al-Nawwar [February] 6, JAMAHARIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The eighth session of the executive council of the Arab Atomic Energy Agency, held between 4th and 5th al-Nawwar concluded in Tripoli yesterday.

Those participating in the session, issued a number of recommendations and resolutions including the following:

Compilation of all text books, encyclopaedias, dictionaries and specialised publications in the area of atomic energy and actions to unify and harmonise them whenever possible.

Proposals for the translation of specialised books in nuclear sciences and cooperation with the Arab center for writers, translators and publishers in the publication of these texts.

The participants stressed the need to take advantage of the resources of the international atomic energy agency, particularly its laboratories and expertise.

The council called on the participants to exert all possible efforts for cooperation with the agency to carry out its plans and programmes and their active contributions to them.

Morocco

Hassan on Saharan Referendum, Planned Elections

LD0602115992 Rabat MAP in Arabic 0900 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Excerpts] New York, 5 Feb (MAP)—King Hassan II gave an interview to REUTER last Saturday in New York, on the eve of the UN Security Council summit meeting. Here is the full text of the interview, of which REUTER transmitted a summary. [passage omitted]

[Unidentified correspondent] How do you assess the situation in Algeria?

[Hassan] Every country is preoccupied by what happens in the neighboring country. We were very preoccupied when the constitutional vacuum took place when the president resigned, and according to the Constitution no one was there to replace him. Our Algerian brothers have found a means of filling this vacuum, and it is not up to me to give a constitutional or legal opinion on this matter. What matters to us is the existence of an authority to talk to, which makes commitments on behalf of Algeria, and which rules Algeria. There is unrest, but what country does not experience unrest? We sincerely hope that this unrest does not last long and does not have a considerable effect on the future. That is my general impression.

[Correspondent] Do you sense the possibility of the situation in Morocco evolving in the same way?

[Hassan] That is a strange question, and I would like to explain why such a thing will never happen in Morocco. Morocco has been a monarchy for 12 centuries, a system that has its own norms.

[Correspondent] With my question, I meant the danger of the threat of religious extremism.

[Hassan] Matters are different because in our country first and foremost the cultural and educational role of religion was defined 12 centuries ago, and what distinguishes Morocco and confers a heavy responsibility on it is the fact that it is a deep-rooted, 12-century-old state. Furthermore, Morocco has one religious doctrine, and we have been observing only the Malekite doctrine for 12 centuries. This is a firm fact. Third, the king of Morocco is at the same time the commander of the faithful. This does not mean, however, that we have not suffered from the fever of religious extremism in the last 12 centuries.

We have been through religious extremism, and this confirms the vitality of the Moroccan entity. Each time this happened, things returned to normal thanks to the soundness of the creed and temporal power. I am not denying that there exist in Morocco people who wear beards and traditional dress, but they do not exaggerate [as received], and so far these people have not caused us any significant problem at the level of what is termed fundamentalism.

[Correspondent] I lived in Pakistan for three years. I would like to know the truth behind what has happened in Algeria, or in other words I would like to ask in a general way about the causes that make fundamentalism surface. Pakistan witnessed incidents similar to those in Algeria and Iran. How does this phenomenon rise to the surface?

[Hassan] As you know, people in Pakistan follow the Shiite doctrine of the Agha Khan. Here I would like to say—with quotation marks—that there are 93 Shiite groups, and that the Shiites in Pakistan are the most moderate ones. What I cannot understand is the change being witnessed by this group; I do not know whether you noticed this or not. This group has started to lean towards extremism. If we are to study the phenomenon from the historian's perspective, I believe that the war in Afghanistan contributed a great deal to pushing the Pakistani Shiites toward extremism. This is because the war acquired a religious aspect against the Soviets, whom the Muslims consider infidels because Lenin and Karl Marx were both atheists as far as we are concerned.

This religious aspect, i.e. the faith along with the gun, was in my opinion the reason behind the change that characterized the behavior of Pakistan's Shiites. This is the explanation which I could attribute to this phenomenon; this explanation could be a nearly correct position. However, the word "mojahedin" used to be echoed by all Pakistanis because it was the support [for the Afghans].

[Correspondent] I would like to ask you a general question: What are the circumstances that give rise to religious extremism?

[Hassan] This is a general question, extremely important yet complex. Religious extremism is a sociological phenomenon. I do not mean a social, but a sociological phenomenon, one which requires a mixture of economic, political, and even revolutionary elements to some extent. There are extremists in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. However, how is that people talk about extremism in Islam only and not in other religions? First of all, and as for Christianity, one finds the phenomenon of secularism. Although it does not have an official aspect everywhere, nevertheless it is recognized in all European and non-European countries. In Christian countries, whether Protestant or Catholic or others, there is no state religion anymore. Therefore, this phenomenon is present in a specific way in a number of these countries. In any case, the evidence is that the current pope and his predecessor tried to establish numerous religious policies, Vatican I and Vatican II, in an attempt to make people follow the same doctrine, so to speak.

Also, Judaism has its extremists. We can see this extremism in the extremist right-wing parties called religious parties inside the Knesset. This phenomenon does not beyond this restricted framework, however. These parties have no influence on Jews who are spread all over the world.

As for Muslims, first of all their number totals 1.2 billion Muslims. This is a significant number, and they represent various races and are found in all countries. The Muslim does not accept living outside the framework of his religion because our religion and daily life are two compatible issues; it is on this point that the sociological phenomenon arises. As for progress in education, scientific development, and economic standards, we will find that either some countries are characterized by tolerance, they are open to the outside world and accept dialogue and an exchange of views; or you will find some countries that are closed in on themselves if the educational level is low. This results in intolerance, a lack of dialogue, and the presence of some kind of fanaticism. It would be difficult for us to talk to you about extremism and fundamentalism because the matter warrants a lot of of time. I suppose you understand.

[Correspondent] Totally.

[Hassan] However, of these 1.2 billion Muslims, the Arabs represent only 200 million. They read the Koran in their own language, whereas the others must have translators. The matter can be compared to someone who prays in Latin or in the sacred language of the Torah; only the one who is knowledgeable in the language would be able to translate.

[Correspondent] Is there a fixed date for holding the referendum in the Sahara?

[Hassan] I hope that the referendum will take place as soon as possible for various reasons. First of all, we would like to close this file, and second, I would like to organize legislative elections in Morocco shortly because it has been a long time since elections were last held. During this time a large section of young people has reached the legal age to vote and be elected: there are only eight years separating us from the year 2000. We would like to embark on the year 2000 by holding elections that will instill new fresh blood in Morocco. Competition, liberalism, intensive agriculture, and employment all warrant new blood and a new vision especially now that the men for this stage are available in Morocco and their age varies from 28 to 35. They were not elected during the previous elections because they were not of legal age.

For this reason, the managing team either in the administration or parliament requires a continuous renewal because authority can become exhausted [words indistinct]. For this very reason I hope that we will be able to close the referendum file because it is mortgaging Morocco's public political life. If you would like to move on to "local issues," this is the best introduction.

[Correspondent] You do not mean, Your Majesty, that the elections will not be held before the year 2000, do you?

[Hassan] No, I said that we are eight years away from the year 2000 and that we should change the present team. Only eight years separate us from the year 2000, and that is a short period of time.

[Correspondent] Do you mean that the referendum on the Sahara will be held before the legislative elections?

[Hassan] Yes, because we are in the Sahara and I can hold the elections in Morocco [words indistinct]. On the other hand, I do not want to hold the elections in Morocco alone, to the exclusion of the Saharan provinces, as this would be an admission that the Sahara is not Moroccan. Thus, I am committed to the referendum.

[Correspondent] Do you intend to make the Moroccan dirham a convertible currency in 1993?

[Hassan] The news of the signing of the agreement between Morocco and the IMF was a very pleasant surprise for us, especially because it was approved unanimously and the communique then issued in this respect praised my country very highly. We should not be laid back, however, due to this happiness. We must prove that we are worthy of this praise, and we should continue this effort at any rate. It is certain that I remain intent on seeing the dirham become convertible by the end of this year, but we must make things clear. The basic issue for

us is that the convertibility should be above all a guarantee of trust and credibility. Therefore, as I told you a moment ago, that requires Morocco to have the "economic man" appropriate for the coming century at the levels of finance, banking, insurance, investment, agricultural development, and organizing employment.

[Correspondent] There have been reports of contacts between your government and the Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro] in Brussels, and the matter concerns a statement, I believe. Is this correct?

[Hassan] As for contacts with the "Polisario," we hold them daily, not at the official level, but at other levels. Do you know that a direct telephone line links Tindouf, Layoune, Agadir, and Rabat? The Saharans residing in Morocco daily contact Tindouf to tell their friends: "What are you waiting for before returning to your native country? We are well and lead a contented life, for we have all the food, drinking water, electricity, etc., that we need." Telephone contacts have become an ordinary matter, and as Churchill said at the start of World War II, this war is "strange," and the Saharan problem is likewise a strange problem to a certain degree.

[Correspondent] As for organizing the referendum as soon as possible, do you believe that the process will take place and end after a month, three months, or at the end of the year?

[Hassan] Former UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar presented his report on 31 December 1991, and it was endorsed, especially the timetables and dates included in it. And if we concentrated on the issue of the lists of those who will vote, and this is the main problem, and if we were able to settle it, and I believe that we will be able to settle it by May or June at the latest, the problem will be solved.

[Correspondent] Will the referendum be held before May or June?

[Hassan] We could hold it around May or June, before the summer.

[Correspondent] I have only one question of an administrative nature: What is time required for holding legislative elections after the referendum?

[Hassan] First of all, the electoral lists should be revised and updated. This is because according to our law the electoral lists are automatically updated, but people do not always give this matter due attention and do not register themselves for these lists when they attain the legal age. Thus there is a need to prepare the electoral lists. Also, since the last elections an insignificant number of local councils and municipalities have been created. Moreover, cities have grown. All this dictates new electoral divisions. But if the referendum is held in May or June, it is possible for us to have a new parliament for the opening of the parliamentary session in October. From now on we will pore over the preparation of the upcoming legislative elections at the level of the electoral lists. This way, and immediately after the referendum, we will hold elections in the summer and we will be ready for the new parliament in October, God willing.

King Hassan Returns From UN Security Council

LD0502155592 Rabat MAP in English 1222 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Text] Marrakech, Feb. 5 (MAP)—King Hassan II Tuesday flew back home coming from New York where he partook in the first summit meeting of the UN Security Council. The sovereign's address before the Council focused on the tragedy of the Palestinian people and the need for the international community to settle this issue, stressed the paramount importance of the holy city of al-Quds for Muslims, Christians and Jews and the necessity to find a fair solution to the question and dwelt on the socioeconomic situation in Africa and the close relationship existing between development and peace. King Hassan II also dealt with the issues of disarmament, the banning of chemical weapons and human rights.

While in New York, the sovereign conferred with US President George Bush, President of France Francois Mitterrand and Austrian Federal Chancellor Franz Vranitzky as well as with the current and former UN Secretaries General Butrus Butrus Ghali and Javier Perez de Cuellar. King Hassan II also received UNICEF Director General James Grant who presented to the sovereign, for signature, the universal declaration for the survival, protection and promotion of children as well as the declaration-related action plan for the nineties.

Sudan

41 Coupists Arrested, 2 Possibly Executed

PM0702110692 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 6 Feb 92 p 1

['Uthman Mirghani report: "Forty-One Sudanese Officers Arrested on Charges of Planning To Bomb Revolution Council Meeting"]

[Excerpt] London—Informed Sudanese sources have said that security forces in Khartoum have arrested 41 officers, most of them from the Air Force, on charges of planning to bomb a Sudanese Revolution [Command] Council meeting.

The sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the arrests were made at dawn last Sunday after the security organs received information about meetings held by the officers at several locations, including the aircraft hangar at the Wadi Sayyidna base, north of Omdurman.

The security forces accused the detained officers of planning to attack a meeting chaired by Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir inside the general command.

The sources could neither confirm nor deny reports about the execution of two of the detained officers.

The reports said that a plan was prepared by five Air Force officers to launch an attack by two helicopters against the location of a joint meeting between the Revolution Command Council and the Council of Ministers intended to discuss the economic measures announced last Sunday.

But the sources confirmed the arrests to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT and said that the detainees include 30 Air Force officers, three paratroopers, one from the Defense Ministry, and seven officers from other units. [passage omitted]

Industry Minister Views Losses, Reconstruction

JN0602151092 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1228 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Baghdad, 6 Feb (INA)—Industrial facilities in this country suffered $3.8 billion worth of damage during the 30-state aggression.

This was announced today by Lieutenant General 'Amir Hammudi al-Sa'di, minister of industry and minerals, during a meeting with Algerian and Jordanian press delegations currently visiting Iraq to cover the activities marking the first anniversary of the Mother of Battles epic.

The minister reviewed the treacherous attacks against industrial facilities—including food, medicine, clothing, fertilizer, engineering and construction material, and petrochemical factories—in addition to attacks against the electricity sector.

The minister said the mujahidin of the industrial sector went beyond the 1991 reconstruction plans. They accomplished the first and second phases of the reconstruction plan, and began withdrawing money from the 1992 budget to meet the needs of the reconstruction process, which is constantly escalating thanks to the competence, experience, and high national resolve of the workers to counter the impact of the aggression despite the unjust blockade.

The minister explained that the ministry's facilities were also engaged in another pioneering experience—namely, manufacturing spare parts. The 1991 plan has been accomplished, he said, with the ministry producing more than $50 million worth of spare parts for machines and equipment used in industrial installations.

'Big Theft' at Electronic Industries Company

JN0602203892 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic 2 Feb 92 p 8

[Excerpts] The directorate responsible for combating economic crimes, "economic security," has uncovered a big theft from warehouses belonging to the public company for electronic industries.

The value of the stolen goods is estimated at millions of dinars. Investigation of this case is under the full supervision of the interior minister. [passage omitted]

A member of the economic security force, which is supervising the investigation on this case, has summed up the crime by saying that on 1 November 1991, the directorate for combating economic crimes received information concerning thefts from the warehouses of the public company for electronic industries.

Some of the company's employees were caught red-handed with the evidence to condemn them. The results of the investigation and an inventory of the company's warehouses indicated that 472,204 items were missing. This was found after an inventory of only two of the company's four warehouses was taken. [passage omitted]

Official Meets Kurdistan Regional Leaders

JN0502180292 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Text] At the direction of the leader, President Saddam Husayn, Comrade Khadr 'Abd-al-'Aziz Husayn, Regional Command member and the official in charge of the North Organization Bureau of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, met with the heads of the Legislative and Executive Councils of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region as well as the councils' secretaries general.

During the meeting, the Regional Command member stressed the need to extend services as quickly as possible to the citizens of the Makhmur District and its subdistricts, and the Altun Kupri Subdistrict, implementing President Saddam Husayn's directives. During the meeting, which took place in the Ninawa Governorate today in the presence of the secretary of the Irbil Ba'th Party Branch, they also discussed ways to invest all efforts to overcome the routine in processing citizens' transactions, to meet their needs, and to carry out services projects.

Editorial Denounces Blockade, 'Evil Intentions'

JN0602164292 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1530 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Untitled "editorial"; from the "Radio Newspaper" program]

[Text] Gentlemen: The UN Security Council has renewed the unjust blockade against the Iraqi people for another two months. It is no longer strange for the Security Council to issue such a decision, since international decision-making is in the hands of the U.S. Administration, and since the other members have no choice but to sign the decisions issued by Washington against Iraq.

Renewal of the blockade against Iraq comes at a time when more voices are being raised condemning and denouncing the American policy and its interference in Iraq's internal affairs. Meanwhile, Iraq has reaffirmed its commitment to cooperate with the UN inspection teams. Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, Iraq's permanent representative to the UN, said that Iraq has complied with all the provisions of the Security Council resolutions without the council expressing any appreciation. Al-Anbari added that 13 [as heard] Security Council members favor lifting the blockade against Iraq; however, one or two states—namely, the United States and Britain—oppose this for political reasons.

The continuation of the blockade under American pressure, threats, and blackmail has exposed the reality of the premeditated hostile intentions against the Iraqi people, and revealed the false slogans raised by the aggressors to carry out their aggression against Iraq one year ago.

The more the Americans and the Zionists harm our people and attempt to humiliate them and destroy their will, the more our great people will face their enemies with steadfastness, patience, and firmness, expressing their faithfulness to their historic leadership; sincerity to their great principles; and their readiness for sacrifices, giving, and construction.

The dreams of the enemies will be dashed and their evil intentions will be foiled, with God's help.

Arab League Stand Denounced

JN0602201292 Baghdad Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] The Arab League's Economic and Social Council met yesterday, Wednesday. The council did not include the blockade against Iraq on its agenda during the experts' preparatory meetings. Those who objected to placing the blockade on the agenda claimed that this issue does not fall within their jurisdiction.

The Arab Economic and Social Council does not have the power to discuss the blockade imposed on Iraq; it is not concerned with the shortage of food and medicine, the suffering of women and children, or the pains of old men and sick people. This council has nothing to do with the consequences of the 20-month starvation of their kinfolk who committed the crime of defending Arab values, rights, and territories. Their crime is that they rejected submission and humiliation to the U.S. Administration's hegemony and Bush's arrogance, and that they adopted a genuine Arab position in defending not only their national soil, but all Arab soil. Iraq defended the Arabs and hit Tel Aviv, the den of evil and capital of aggression. Does this Iraq deserve the blockade and the death of tens of thousands of its children? Therefore, if the Arab quarters and the organizations of the Arab League are not responsible for breaking the blockade imposed on Iraq, and if they are not concerned about its people's suffering, how can they be responsible for other causes? The Arab organizations are not concerned with the lifting of the blockade; they are concerned with its continuation.

President Bush decides whether the blockade should continue or be lifted. Since Bush is the decisionmaker, this blockade will continue as long as American hegemony over the world continues. Bush demonstrated this fact when he laid down the framework and the course of the Security Council summit. He said: This summit should not discuss the issue of the blockade, which should continue. Bush issued his orders and the others complied with them. On this basis, the Security Council on 5 February issued its unjust decision to continue the blockade against the Iraqi people—against baby food and medicine.

The resolution was issued by the president of the Security Council for this month, the U.S. representative, who said: The council members adopted this resolution. We note that the council did not discuss [words indistinct] the reasons as in previous discussions, and decided to submit—as always—to American hegemony.

Let the blockade continue as a form of aggression against the people of Iraq. Those who—by fire and sword—failed to undermine the will of this people will not achieve this by starving them. Time will prove this.

Government Reportedly Provides Contaminated Flour

NC0702080092 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1605 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Reports from the town of Kifri say that a number of citizens have been seriously poisoned, after using adulterated flour the regime sent to the town to kill our innocent people.

30,000 Said Poisoned

LD0602201892 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1900 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Thirty thousand inhabitants of the Kifri region in northern Iraq have been badly poisoned because they used flour which was contaminated with chemicals. The flour had been sent to the region by the Iraqi regime. Many of the poisoned are on the verge of death.

According to PUK [Kurdistan Workers Party] Radio, currently groups from the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, as well as doctors from northern Iraq, are helping those who have been poisoned.

Protest Lodged Over U.S. Airspace 'Violations'

JN0702120792 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] Iraq has once again protested the violation of Iraqi airspace by U.S. aircraft for surveillance and provocation purposes.

In a memorandum to the UN secretary general, Iraq's permanent UN envoy explained that there were 115 violations of Iraqi airspace by enemy aircraft from 28 January to 4 February, including sorties over Mosul, Dahuk, Irbil, Zakho, Tall 'Afar, Dukan, Rawandoz, al-'Amadiyah, 'Ayn Zalah, and Sinjar at different altitudes and speeds.

Baker Remarks Cause 'Great Apprehension'

TA0702090992 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 7 Feb 92 pp 1, 10

[Report by political correspondent Shim'on Schiffer and Washington-based correspondent Rami Tal]

[Excerpt] Decisionmakers in Jerusalem received with great apprehension the remarks U.S. Secretary of State James Baker made yesterday before the House Foreign Affairs Committee regarding the loan guarantees and aid Israel receives from the United States.

High-level officials in Jerusalem noted that, for the first time, Baker linked the aid Israel receives from the United States with the loan guarantees, and they took note of the linkage the United States has drawn between the guarantees and continued Israeli settlement drive. It is feared, therefore, that in the future as well the administration will link granting economic aid to Israel with the cessation of settlement activity.

Israeli Ambassador to Washington Zalman Shoval will meet with Secretary Baker in Washington today. Shoval has been authorized by the prime minister to tell the U.S. secretary of state that Israel is willing to enter into detailed negotiations with the United States on terms for receiving the loan guarantees. Shoval will stress to Baker Israel's commitment not to use funds obtained from loans based on the guarantees in the territories. [passage omitted]

'Cautious Optimism' on Getting Loan Guarantees

TA0602203392 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Excerpts] Political sources in Jerusalem voiced cautious optimism this evening regarding the chances of getting the loan guarantees from the United States. The view prevailing in Jerusalem is that, subject to certain qualifications, Israel will gradually receive the requested guarantees. Israeli Ambassador Zalman Shoval will meet U.S. Secretary of State James Baker tomorrow evening for another talk to clarify the matter. [passage omitted]

[Political correspondent Gadi Sukenik] Zalman Shoval, our ambassador to the United States, held many consultations in Jerusalem last week. The bottom line is that when he meets Baker tomorrow, Shoval will not be delivering to him an unequivocal Israeli response concerning the guarantees. He has been instructed to explore how much pressure the U.S. Administration would be ready to apply on Israel to change its policy in the territories, in exchange for the guarantees for the absorption of aliyah. In other words, Ambassador Shoval will have to find out exactly what Bush and Baker demand from Yitzhaq Shamir.

It is clear to both sides that Israel desperately needs the guarantees, and this would appear to make Israel vulnerable to pressure. There are many variables in this war of nerves, however, and it seems the Americans have not yet consolidated a final position.

The assessment in Jerusalem is that a decision on the guarantees will be delayed for at least a few weeks, and that is why Israel is in no rush to give a response. The big question is: Will the prime minister commit himself to withdrawing from his avowed policy without publicly acknowledging it? Will he, at some stage, agree to freeze or reduce settlement activities?

Ministers in the Likud think that, left with no other choice, Shamir would be willing to do that. Nevertheless, once again this evening, officials in the Prime Minister's Office denounced any linkage between aid to aliyah and policymaking. They noted that the government would continue to absorb aliyah and, at the same time, settle the territories. The prime minister's associates believe that despite the threats and difficulties a formula, albeit complicated, will be found. They think that under certain conditions and subject to closer supervision than in the past, Israel will gradually receive aid to absorb the immigrants.

Buwayz Receives Invitation to Washington Talks

NC0602185392 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] The bilateral talks on Middle East peace have returned to the forefront. Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has announced that Lebanon received a U.S. invitation to resume the Middle East bilateral peace talks in Washington on 24 February. He said Lebanon's answer will be announced in two days, after the president and the prime minister have assessed the seriousness of the next round. Lebanon is discussing the likelihood of an Israeli attempt to stall for time and whether a positive outcome is expected from these talks, taking into consideration the Israeli elections and whether anything will emerge before the elections. He ruled out the possibility of reaching a conclusion before the Israeli elections.

In an interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Buwayz said the U.S. Administration affirmed to Lebanon more than once that the peace process might progress rapidly through an Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in or around April 1992, which would precede an agreement on an autonomy formula for the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. But he added that there are some contradictions in this, especially since many European capitals have informed Lebanon that because of Israel's intransigence, Resolution 425 has become contingent upon a comprehensive solution in the Middle East.

Buwayz pointed out that Lebanon's boycott of the multilateral talks does not affect its decision to participate in the bilateral talks. He said the U.S. ambassador in Lebanon, Ryan Crocker, who yesterday handed him an invitation to attend the bilateral talks, conveyed Washington's view that Lebanon's participation in the multilateral negotiations is as important as its participation in the bilateral negotiations because Israel is using the boycott by some Arab countries to demonstrate to world public opinion that Israel is not the one hampering the peace process.

Buwayz received Crocker at 1600 today, for the second time in 24 hours. Crocker said after the meeting that he conveyed proposals on the bilateral talks and other topics to the foreign minister. He declined to comment further.

'Lebanon Will Participate'

PM0602164092 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 6 Feb 92 p 1

[By 'Ali Hamadah: "Lebanese Foreign Minister Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Boycotting Multilateral Talks in Moscow Does Not Means Withdrawing From Bilateral Talks"]

[Excerpt] Paris—Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has emphasized that Lebanon will participate in the bilateral negotiations expected to be held in Washington 24 February, after receiving the invitation from U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker yesterday. Buwayz told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT by telephone that Lebanon's position rejecting participation in the multilateral negotiations did not mean that Lebanon would not return to the bilateral negotiations table.

He expressed his fear the Israeli and U.S. elections would cause an obstruction in the negotiation process.

On the U.S. position, which Crocker conveyed to the Lebanese Government, he said: The Americans believe that Lebanon's attendance at the multilateral negotiations is as important as attending the bilateral negotiations, because Israel uses the Arab states' boycott as an excuse to show the world that they are not the ones obstructing the peace process. But Lebanon believes that it is bilateral negotiations, dealing with such important questions as the recovery of the occupied territories from Israel, that will lay the foundations for the multilateral negotiations.

On Resolution 425, which demands an unconditional Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon, Buwayz said: The U.S. Administration has told Lebanon on several occasions that the peace process could make rapid progress through an Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon around April 1992, and prior to the agreement on a self-rule formula for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. But there are things that conflict with these assurances, especially since several European capitals have informed Lebanon that Resolution 425 has become dependent on a comprehensive solution to the Middle East as a result of Israeli intransigence. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan

UN To Invite 150 Afghan Figures to Peace Talks

BK0602154592 Hong Kong AFP in English 1657 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, Feb 6 (AFP)—The United Nations wants to invite some 150 leading Afghan figures to peace talks in April aimed at seeking a political settlement to the Afghan conflict, informed sources here said Thursday.

U.N. envoy for Afghanistan Benon Sevan last week asked Pakistan-based Afghan opposition groups to submit lists of those willing to attend the intra-Afghan peace assembly to be held in Switzerland, Turkey or another Moslem country, the sources said.

Sevan has had a total of 28 meetings during his four-day stay in Peshawar, close to the Afghan border, and is scheduled to go to Kabul on Sunday and then Tehran two days later.

Afghan President Najibollah will not be invited to the talks, the sources said.

According to the resistance news agency MIDIA, those invited from Kabul would be "representatives of Kabul and not of the Kabul regime."

MIDIA said the assembly would be attended by lower ranking figures, including tribal and religious leaders, military commanders, intellectuals and "Afghans living abroad and in Kabul."

Most of those Sevan met in Peshawar confirmed there was no question of negotiating with Najibollah or Kabul Government officials, who have been accused of participating in "the atrocities of the Soviet occupation."

According to MIDIA, the assembly will set up a 30-member working group charged with organising a larger assembly on Afghan territory and preparing drafts for the appointment of an interim government in Kabul.

The larger assembly would be the real decision-making authority, Sevan told resistance leaders here, and members of the working group would be ineligible to join the government.

Informed sources here said Sevan's talks had seen "some positive movement" towards a settlement.

However, the chief of the fundamentalist Ettehad-e-Eslami party, 'Abdol Rab Rasul Sayyaf, refused to see the U.N. envoy, while another fundamentalist leader, Golbuddin Hekmatyar, said he would accept the peace formula only if the United Nations condemned the Kabul regime.

The Afghan war, which continues three years after the Soviet withdrawal, has claimed more than a million lives and forced five million refugees to flee to Pakistan and Iran.

Rebel Leaders Reject Plan for Coalition Government

BK0602150592 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 6 Feb 92 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, Feb. 5—Commanders from different provinces of South-West Afghanistan rejected a coalition Government in accordance with the UN five-point in which Zaher Shah, the ex-King and Najib, the present ruler of the puppet regime, will be included.

Informing the MIDIA [MEDIA INFORMATION DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC AFGHANISTAN] office in Quetta through wireless messages, commanders Ghyassoddin of Zabol, Haji Amanullah of Qandahar, Mohammad Rasool Akhund Zada of Helmand provinces vehemently ruled out participation of Zaher Shah and Najib or his puppet regime and party as well as the intra-Afghan dialogue proposed by the UN.

The report added the commanders declared to continue jihad till the establishment of an Islamic Government which is acceptable to the Muslim nation of Afghanistan.

They cautioned the UN that it must not continue struggling to bringing those figures in Afghanistan who do not have a foot step in Afghanistan and are not acceptable.

Mojahedin's Rabbani Criticizes UN Peace Efforts

PM0602161692 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 2 Feb 92 p 6

['Abdallah al-Haj report: "Burhanuddin Rabbani Tells AL-HAYAH: Afghan Settlement Efforts Incomplete, No Coordination Between Mojahedin and Islamabad"]

[Text] Jeddah—Burhanuddin Rabbani, leader of the Afghan Jam'iyat-e Eslami, has described the UN efforts to find a settlement to the Afghan issue as "incomplete and unstudied experiments." He told AL-HAYAH by telephone that any settlement that does not take account of the mojahedin's legitimate rights is "unacceptable." He pointed to the absence of coordination between Pakistani leaders and the Afghan mojahedin at this stage. He called on the mojahedin groups to quickly destroy the Kabul regime.

Asked about his position on UN efforts to hold peace negotiations before the month of Ramadan [begins around 4 March] with the participation of representatives from the Kabul government, he said that "making the Afghan issue a field for incomplete, unstudied experiments could lead to sinister consequences." He wondered: "How can an attempt to find solutions be destroyed at the halfway stage, since the United Nations previously welcomed negotiations. It could lead us into a vicious circle. We emphasize that we welcome UN cooperation, provided it is it does not ignore the mojahedin's will."

On the idea of holding a meeting between figures from the Kabul regime and the mojahedin, which was supported by Pakistan, he emphasized that no coordination took place with the Pakistan Government in that regard

and added: "We emphasize the need to continue the strong understanding and cooperation between the mojahedin and the fraternal states and, first and foremost, Pakistan."

Asked about Pakistan's contacts to secure former King Zahir Shah's return, he immediately said that "the Pakistani Government is free and can pursue its national interests, but with regard to our issues in Afghanistan, we do not welcome the endeavors being made to return Zahir Shah. This, because we are certain that it does not help much in resolving the problem. In fact it complicates it further and leads us into the unknown. We still emphasize the need for coordination among the mojahedin, the Pakistan Government, and the other fraternal states."

He said that the demand for Zahir Shah's return "is a seasonal call repeated by some quarters from time to time whenever any hopes of ending the catastrophe and of the Afghan people's reaching safety appear on the horizon." He added: "I do not agree to our people's sons—with the exception of the communists, who have betrayed their religion and country—being prevented from participating in self-determination. But I will not agree to this participation being conducted in a conspiratorial way designed to shift the mojahedin. After the successful negotiations between the mojahedin and Moscow and the firmness of the mojahedin's political initiative, some hands have certainly started to work to prevent the Afghan people from reaping the fruits of their jihad."

He said that "there is a virtual conspiracy against the mojahedin's future in Afghanistan. It is led by numerous quarters, each of which is doing its utmost to remove the mojahedin from the decisionmaking center and to give them a marginal role in settling the Afghan issues. He said that the mojahedin groups should unite ranks and facilities to quickly destroy the present regime so that there will be no gap through which the enemies can infiltrate."

Views Pakistani Policy Shift

BK0602103592 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 5 Feb 92 p 2

[By Ahmad Muaffaq Zaidan]

[Text] Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani, the leader of Jamiat-e-Eslami, reconstruction minister in AIG [Afghan Interim Government] and acting foreign minister, has rejected the return of ex-king Zaher Shah to Afghanistan and said that he would never accept him in any case.

In an interview, Rabbani said: "We will never participate in any such conference in which Kabul regime takes part because it comprises criminals".

When asked about the Pakistan government pressure on Mojahedin to accept intra-Afghan dialogue, he said "We will never accept the participation of Kabul regime in any conference as we do not want to sit with it for talks".

When asked why Pakistan changed its policy towards Afghanistan and worked to bring Zaher Shah back Rabbani said: "May be Pakistan has a right for this shift because mojahedin do not follow a consistent policy. For instance, they dealt with AIG like previous alliances and thus destroyed it. Some mojahedin leaders took a nervous attitude towards Pakistan and Pakistan also reacted likewise. However, he said, Pakistan should understand the actual situation in Afghanistan.

About prospects of the future interim government Rabbani said: "I think for security and stability of Afghanistan, the president should be from mojahedin side but we can agree on a person living abroad—Pakistan and Iran if we fail to take any decision in this regard. But in that case too only mojahedin should decide the matter besides the man leading such government should protect the interest of Jihad and Islamic state.

Asked about the mojahedin co-operation with UN he said: "We co-operate with international institution but we believe that Afghanistan problem does not need UN intervention because the situation is normal and the Afghan can solve their problems. We will co-operate with such an institution if it helps the oppressed, not the oppressors."

Rabbani asked mojahedin to consider such proposals in a serene manner instead of being nervous.

About the dropping of food by Iran in Kabul City and central Afghanistan, Rabbani said: "When Iranian officials asked me about this I was opposed to it one grounds that such thing should be done with the co-ordination of mojahedin and this dropping was not in the favour of mojahedin but it would strengthen the Kabul regime.

On relations between mojahedin and Central Asia, Rabbani asserted that he would send a delegation to these states to explaind the mojahedin's stand and remove the misunderstanding.

India

Kashmir Forces on Alert for JKFL March

BK0602145692 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] The security forces in Jammu and Kashmir continue to be in a state of alert notwithstanding the reported decision of Pakistan to disallow a march by the JKLF [Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front] volunteers into the valley. In an interview to PTI [PRESS TRUST OF INDIA], the minister of state for home, Mr. M.M. Jacob, asserted that violators of the line of actual control, whether they are Pak-trained militants or Army personnel in the garb of so-called marchers, will be prevented from entering the valley at any cost. He said we have enough forces on the border to meet any eventuality.

Rao on Border Situation

BK0702011492 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0030 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] The prime minister has apprised the leaders of major opposition parties in parliament of the situation along the India-Pakistan border arising out of the JKLF [Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front] plan to cross the Line of Control into the country and steps being taken by the government. Mr. L.K. Advani of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], Mr. V.P. Singh of Janata Dal, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjit of CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] and Mr. Inderjit Gupta of CPI [Communist Party of India] attended the meeting in New Delhi last night. Union ministers, Mr. Sharad Pawar, Mr. Arjun Singh, Mr. Shankaranand, Mr. R. Kumaramangalam; Jammu and Kashmir Governor Girish Chander Saxsena; and senior officials also attended the meeting.

The CPI-M has deplored the statement of the Pakistani prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, pledging continued support to the separatists in Kashmir. In a statement, the Politburo of the party said the Kashmir issue should be resolved through negotiations under the Simla Agreement.

The BJP vice president, Mr. K.L. Sharma, has said if Pakistan does not want to honor the Simla Agreement, India should evolve a strategy to deal with the situation.

UN Help Sought

BK0602161692 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] India today urged the five permanent member countries to the UN Security Council to use their good offices and ask Pakistan to cease and desist from heightening tension over Kashmir. In an unprecedented move, the foreign secretary, Mr. J.N. Dixit, met ambassadors of the U.S., Britain, Russia, France, and China together in New Delhi and briefed them about the situation created by the threatened crossing of the line of control in Kashmir by the JKLF [Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front] activists and other provocative actions by the government-backed strike in Pakistan.

The cabinet committee on political affairs met here [in New Delhi] tonight to review the situation concerning Islamabad's action on Kashmir and New Delhi's response. The prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, presided over the meeting. The meeting took place in the backdrop of a resolution passed by the Pakistan National Assembly earlier today expressing solidarity with the people of Kashmir and statements made by the Pakistani prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, in Pak-occupied Kashmir saying that Kashmir would be liberated from the clutches of India.

The amabassadors of the five countries have promised to convey New Delhi's views to Pakistan and western nations.

Spokesman on Pakistan Strike Call, JKLF March

BK0602153792 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 1427 GMT 6 Feb 92

["Spokesman's response to a query on Pakistan Prime Minister Mr. Nawaz Sharif's call for a nationwide strike to observe 5th February as a 'Day of Solidarity': Dated 4/2/92"]

[Text] In response to a question, the spokesman said that India has noted with deep concern, unacceptable call issue by the PM [prime minister] of Pakistan for a nationwide strike to observe 5th Feb as a "Day of Solidarity" with the people of Kashmir.

The spokesman said that the Government of India considers this a blatant attempt at interfering in India's internal affairs. This is the third consecutive year that the Government of Pakistan has chosen to associate itself with such action, which is clearly designed to inflame public opinion and incite people to violence and militancy. The statement of PM Nawaz sharif is not in keeping with the spirit of recent discussions with our prime minister in Davos, and again raises doubts about Pakistan's sincerity with regard to efforts being made by the two sides to reduce tension and build mutual confidence and trust. The spokesman said that India would urge the Government of Pakistan to abandon its negative approach towards India and to refrain from propagandistic actions that undermine the ongoing process of bilateral dialogue.

While referring to the editorial which appered in a Pakistan daily, THE NATION dated 2/2/92, the spokesman said the call given by the Punjab branch of JKLF [Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front] for crossing of the Line of Control, has been termed as a counter-productive exercise. The editorial has further said that it would give credence to India's standpoint at various international platforms that Kashmiri uprising is not an indigenous movement for a people's right to self-determination, but merely a Pakistani instigated rebellion.

The editorial says that crossing of the Line of Control will further complicate matters for Pakistan since, under Simla agreement, the country is committed to respect the Line of Control "without prejudice to recognised positions of either side."

Party Appeals Decision To Hold Punjab Election

BK0602135492 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] The Akali Dal-Pheruman has appealed to the government to reconsider its decision on holding elections in Punjab. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today, the party president, Mahant Sevadas Singh, said elections in Punjab will be futile till some demands of the people of the state are acceded to by the government. These include handing over Chandigarh to Punjab and reference to the water dispute to

the Supreme Court. He said the Akalis have a democratic right to boycott elections, but he advised them not to stop people from voting.

Iran

Oil Minister Urges Reduction in OPEC Ceiling

LD0602132192 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran has asked for lowering the OPEC production ceiling so as to prevent a fall in the global price of oil. Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh, in an interview with reporters this morning, explained our country's views on the coming OPEC session, which is due to be held in Geneva next week. He said: Iran is in favor of an immediate reduction in the oil production ceiling so as to stabilize the $21 bench price. He added: We believe that if Iraq does not enter the quota system, the members should reduce some of their quota in proportion to their production; and if the Security Council were to agree to Iraq's oil export, then the members' quota would change so that the oil price would reach $21 [per barrel] by lowering supply in view of the low market demand.

On his visit to the Republic of Ukraine and the new agreements with that country, and on laying three gas pipelines to Europe via the republics of Ukraine and Azerbaijan, the oil minister said: During the current Christian year and in the first stage, the volume of Iranian gas exports to the republics of Ukraine and Azerbaijan is expected to be three billion cubic meters; and in the next stage three pipelines will be laid with the capacity of 75 billion cubic meters.

About kerosene distribution inside the country, Mr Aqazadeh said: The Oil Ministry has distributed more kerosene during the current year than the quota fixed by the government; and at the present the country's refineries produce 45 percent more than their nominal capacity; and this year, in addition to domestic production, about $1.5 billion worth of kerosene has been purchased from abroad and distributed. But because of the cold weather, which has been unprecedented for the past 30 years, the people are facing some difficulties. However, we shall strive to supply enough kerosene next year [from 21 March 1992] and remove the quota restrictions.

More on OPEC, Ukraine

LD0602133192 Tehran IRNA in English 1111 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 6, IRNA—Oil Minister Gholamreza Aqazadeh here Thursday warned the 13-member Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) against what he called a "sharp decline" in oil prices and urged them to "find a remedy." Aqazadeh told reporters that failure to take a practical and fundamental measure to reduce OPEC output and oil supplies to the world market, will dramatically reduce the prices in the second quarter of the current year. He noted that oil prices were not high even during the winter season which is normally characterized by high oil prices. "We seriously recommend OPEC members to take measures to reduce their production ceiling."

On the forthcoming session of the OPEC monitoring committee, due in Geneva on February 12, he said that it is likely to become an extraordinary session. According to Aqazadeh the Geneva session will focus on determining production ceiling, OPEC price, return of Iraq to the oil market and setting the quotas for the members. The oil minister noted that in light of likelihood of Iraq's entering the oil market by the second quarter of this year, quotas of OPEC members should be reviewed on the basis of the June agreement.

Aqazadeh said that according to various statistical sources, the present OPEC production stood at about 24 million barrels per day, adding "market conditions are not favourable for none [as received] of the members. Further decline in the price of oil in 1992 will entail economic crisis for the member states." He put Iran's present oil production at 3.550 million barrels per day. Iran voluntarily cut down her oil production by 50,000 barrels per day as of January 22 this year. The measure was subsequently followed by a number of other OPEC members.

He said that in the new Iranian calendar year (beginning March 21) rationing on kerosine and engine oil, imposed after the outbreak of the Iraqi-imposed war in 1980, will be ended. According to Aqazadeh the Oil Ministry has no problem in this connection and as soon as the go ahead is given by the government and the Majlis, the Oil Ministry will lift the fuel rationing. He admitted that there has been an acute fuel shortage in the country this year but added that the supplies to the domestic market this year was even higher than last year. He said in spite of the fact that oil refineries were operating 45 percent above their nominal capacity, the increased per capita oil consumption and population growth had aggravated the problem.

Pointing to his recent visit to the newly-independent Central Asian Republic of Ukraine, Aqazadeh said according to an agreement signed between the two sides, Iran will export a minimum of 3,000 million cubic meters of natural gas to that country through Astara border point in 1992-93. Within a long-term cooperation, three giant pipelines will be built for the export of a total of 75,000 million cubic meters of Iran's natural gas to Europe through Ukraine and Azerbaijan republics. He noted that countries along the pipeline will be supplied with gas, adding a joint venture will be launched for implementation of the project in which both Iran and Ukraine will hold 45 percent of the shares each and Azerbaijan 10 percent. Construction works will start in the current year and it is predicted that by the end of 1995 or early 1996 the project will become operational.

the oil minister said. He stressed that this project is independent of the other project for the construction of a gas pipeline to Europe, feasibility study of which was underway by the French company Gaz de France. He told reporters that agreement has been reached for export of four million tons of Iran's crude oil to Ukraine in the current year.

Talks were also held on setting up of another joint venture for the annual transfer of 50 to 70 million tons of Iran's crude oil to Europe via Ukraine after the necessary studies. Iran would also purchase 300,000 tons of billets and the same amount of scrap iron and other goods from Ukraine in return for its exports to that country.

Air Force Commander on Modernization, New Equipment

LD0702114992 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] On the threshold of 19 Bahman [8 February], the anniversary of the day when the Air Force pledged its allegiance to Imam Khomeyni [just before the victory of the revolution in February 1979], Brigadier General Sattari, the commander of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Air Force, took part in an interview with reporters this morning and explained the activities of that force in promoting reconstruction and equipping the Air Force bases, fighter planes and aircraft, transportation, and self-sufficiency.

According to our correspondent's report, the Air Force commander referred to the fact that the Air Force has managed to take a number of giant steps toward achieving a high level of operational capability. He said: We have strived for more than nine years to achieve complete independence in the Air Force, and the Air Force College has been established in order to achieve self-sufficieny in skilled and expert manpower.

He added: A number of useful steps have been taken toward the complete independence of the Air Force, making some fundamental changes and creating new innovations in equipment according to the needs of the Air Force. So much so that any kind of repair and conversion of the equipment is made domestically.

The commander of the Air Force added: The reconstruction of the needed equipment for the Air Force—such as fighter planes and transport aircraft, radar, missiles, and other electronic equipment—has been completed and the Air Force has managed to utilize some new equipment and aircraft. Among this equipment, the MiG-29 advanced fighter aircraft, Sukhoy-24, the F-7 aircraft, and the [unspecified] bomber aircraft can be named.

Velayati Discusses NAM, ECO Meetings

LD0702004792 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Foreign Minister Velayati returned to Tehran this evening after participating in the meeting of Nonaligned Movement [NAM] foreign ministers in Larnaca, Cyprus; and in the third Economic Cooperation Organization [ECO] foreign ministers meeting in Turkey.

He discussed his talks in Larnaca and Ankara with our Mehrabad Airport correspondent, saying: The NAM foreign ministers meeting included 43 states and 20 foreign ministers who met to decide the movement's future policy on important world developments. Recent developments in Yugoslavia raised the issue of changing the movement's presidency. It was decided that Indonesia, in cooperation with Yugoslavia, will take on the NAM Presidency until next fall. Velayati added: A draft resolution was drawn up at the Larnaca session to assess the NAM's position in world developments and was referred to the next NAM foreign ministers meeting, which will convene in Indonesia next spring.

The foreign minister also referred to the ECO meeting in Ankara, adding: The session aimed to finalize the approvals of the seven ECO committees in the past year and to prepare the ground for the next ECO summit, which will convene in Tehran next week. Velayati added: Membership of three newly independent states—Azarbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—in ECO was reviewed by the foreign ministers of Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan and was approved. It was also decided that each of the three newly independent Muslim states of the former Soviet Union, which applied for ECO membership, can participate in the Tehran session as observers. Our correspondent reports that leaders of six states—the Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—will participate in the ECO summit.

'Terrorist Squads' Reportedly Sent to Turkey

JN0602182692 Baghdad AL-QADISIYAH in Arabic 4 Feb 92 p 7

[All names as published]

[Text] Paris, INA—The Iranian opposition organization Mojahedin-e Khalq issued a statement yesterday saying that the mullahs' Tehran regime continues to send terrorist squads, affiliated with the Guards Corps, outside Iran to carry out terrorist operations against opposition figures and foreign diplomats.

The organization cited information coming from Iran as stating that several death squads led by Mohammad Jobani, a person belonging to the Hamzah camp affiliated with the Guards Corps located in Orumiyeh in northern Iran, and Hoseyn Shams, one of the leaders who masterminded terrorist operations against Iranian

refugees who supported the Mojahedin-e Khalq in Pakistan in July 1987, have recently arrived in Istanbul for this purpose.

The same information states that Sajjadian and 'Aziz Khalidi, who took part in the April 1990 assassination of Kazem Rajavi, representative of the Iranian resistance in Geneva, have also recently arrived in the Turkish city of Izmir.

During the past three weeks, three other terrorist groups led by Safari, a Guards Corps commander, arrived in Turkey to be sent from there to Cyprus and Europe to carry out terrorist plans there.

It should be recalled that the criminal operations and moves of these Guards personnel are coordinated with the Tehran regime's terrorist diplomats working in Europe.

The Mojahedin-e Khalq organization urged all world states to be alert to the new terrorist moves being made by the Tehran regime, to thwart its efforts to plan and carry out new assassination attempts outside Iran, especially since any new concession to the terrorist Tehran rulers will encourage them to perpetrate more crimes.

U.S. 'Hostile Policy' a Barrier to Ties

LD0602100892 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Statement by Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations—read by announcer]

[Text] So long as the United States effects its age old policies concerning Iran, there will exist no positive prospect concerning relations between the two states.

Referring to the fact that relations should be based on mutual respect, Dr. Kharrazi pinpointed that the U.S. continues its hostile policy toward Iran. He said though the Islamic Republic of Iran did its best humanitarian efforts for the release of the hostages, no change is however witnessed in Washington.

Reiterating the significance of tranquility, stability, and peace in the Persian Gulf region, Mr. Kharrazi noted: The Islamic Republic of Iran will do its best in this regard.

Paper Advises Clerics 'To Supervise' Supporters

NC0702111392 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 29 Jan 92 pp 1, 13

[Editorial: "Some Words to the Clerical Elders"]

[Text] Electioneering is intensifying as we near the date for Majlis elections. This is natural, but it is regrettable that the campaign is two-sided, negative and positive. Some are preparing for elections by trying to identify the candidates they think are qualified and are canvassing for them.

Others are wielding poison-tipped swords, and drawing lines between their ranks. Smear campaigns are rife and one-sided, and near-sighted and malicious analyses are common.

Ostensibly, this is done for greater rapport, but whether this has resulted in getting closer to the devil or to God is a separate discussion which some of us are not prepared to enter. Which sword wielders are right and which are wrong? They all combine these traits and none can be considered completely wrong or completely right.

Perhaps some naive and near-sighted people feel that they can put themselves at the disposal of a particular faction or political group, but they are not like the masses, who are realistic and have acquired political acumen. They do not offer their services to any particular faction. They listen to words and opinions, just as the Koran advises, sift the truth and follow it.

When the wise look at those wielding swords, they consider them to be ignorant individuals who have become embroiled with one another in their greed for worldly gains, or instigators adding grist to the enemy mill. The people will neither be motivated by one nor discouraged by the other. In the recent Assembly of Experts elections we witnessed the people's political maturity, by not permitting lists [preceding word in English] of candidates to overshadow their qualifications. This procedure will be followed in the fourth Majles elections and lists will not take precedence over true merit.

The tussle over who is right or wrong will be nothing more than haggling. The crux of the matter is: Who will gain from this confrontation?

Yesterday we read in the papers that Turkish television screened a film demeaning to the clergy (not the militant clergy or militant clerics but the revolution and clerics in general), which was more insulting than any other film. Is this single report not enough to galvanize our clerical superiors to enter the foray, regardless of whether they are an assembly or an association, to stem such mischief-making and stop their venomous pens from blemishing the dear and the superior, and defiling the basis of the revolution, clergy, and the system?

His eminence the imam, may God's blessings be upon him, has endorsed both factions and warned against the infiltrating "satans" and the "middlemen." No one can deny that these satans and middlemen are present in both factions. Their actions are not appealing. They constantly try to sow discord and catch the fish they want from the waters they muddied.

Why do our dear and clerical superiors permit such abuse of their credibility and prestige? Cannot competitive elections be held in a wholesome and cordial manner? The Islamic Republic of Iran's system is a model for a popular moral government and has the ability to conduct decent elections.

You [the clerics] instructed the people to cultivate these qualities and they believe that you will ensure fine, healthy elections if you enter the arena and stop those who are striking blows.

O people, observe events in Algeria. Your moral strength, which under the guidance of His Eminence Imam Khomeyni, steered the revolution toward victory, has inspired the Islamic movements in Africa and elsewhere in the Islamic world. It would be a pity if we were to witness people outside our boundaries rushing to follow the trail you have blazed while watching those inside sully your prestige and credibility.

O clerical superiors, look at the events which are taking shape and answer the question: Are these two groups who are bickering and striking on the factions' behalf not giving those who wait with poised arrows the opportunity to uproot the tree of which you are the leaves and branches?

If so, then consider a solution and do not let the strong tree, which has been watered with martyrs' blood, topple.

Elections can be convened logically and in an enlightened way, without quarrel, attack, or insult, and people can vote for the candidates they want. This requires the clerical superiors, whether they belong to an assembly or an association, to supervise their supporters' words and actions. Such supervision is now necessary. With salutations.

French Report on Prisoner Dismissed as Lie

LD0602151192 Tehran IRNA in English 1219 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 6, IRNA—Head of the prison administration of Iran Asadollah Lajevardi here Wednesday dismissed as "a mere lie" a French radio report that Maryam Paydar, wife of Iranian political prisoner Javad Ahmadzadeh had burnt herself to death in front of the 'Evin' prison in uptown Tehran.

Lajevardi, in an interview with IRNA, said that despite the claim by the French radio no such person has ever been listed as prisoner anywhere in Iran.

Commenting elsewhere on the status of prisons and prisoners in Iran, he said that all unlettered prisoners have to learn to read and write while they serve their prison terms. He said for the time being there is not even a single illiterate person among the incarcerated people in the country. He also noted that prisoners enjoy various cultural and recreation facilities, and that they are taught dozens of crafts which help their self-employment during their prison term.

Pakistan

40,000 Additional Troops Deployed Along Border

BK0702030092 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0248 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] ANI [Asia News International], quoting defense sources in Islamabad, says Pakistan has deployed an additional 40,000 troops along the Line of Control in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. With this, the total number of Pakistani troops deployed there have increased to 3.25 lakhs [325,000].

JKLF Vows To Cross Kashmir Border Into India

BK0702012292 Hong Kong AFP in English 1815 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Islamabad, Feb 6 (AFP)—Top leaders of a militant Muslim group went into hiding but remained defiant as the Pakistan Government declared late Thursday that it was banning their planned march into Indian-held Kashmir.

"We will go ahead (with the march), no matter what happens," Jammu-Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) Chairman Amanullah Khan told AFP by telephone from a place he described as his "hideout."

"We have taken preventive measures," he said.

The JKLF had alarmed Indian authorities by announcing that its sympathisers would march across the border from Pakistan into Indian Kashmir next Tuesday in support of a raging Muslim separatist campaign there.

A toughly worded Pakistan Government statement describing the JKLF as "irresponsible elements" followed reports that India had asked the U.N. Security Council's five permanent members to prevent Islamabad from escalating tension.

Two of the three wars between Pakistan and India have been sparked by the Kashmir dispute.

"The Government of Pakistan will not allow any irresponsible element to create a law and order situation at the line of control (border)," the official statement said.

Khan called the statement "nasty," and charged that Islamabad had bowed to Indian pressure.

Saying he feared arrest, Khan said the JKLF would "try to avoid a head-on collision" with Pakistani authorities. But if pressed, "We will have no alternative" but to resist, he added.

He said the Azad (Free) Kashmir state government, which administers the one-third of Kashmir under Pakistani control, had said "it would not stand in our way" because the Kashmiri nation had never accepted the ceasefire line.

Kashmir is India's only Muslim-majority state.

Government To Take Steps

BK0602154492 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] A Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad today that the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front's [JKLF] program of crossing the Line of Control lacks the support of the Government of Pakistan. When asked to comment on the proposed plan, the spokesman said that the government is aware of its responsibilities and will take appropriate steps in this regard. The spokesman expressed the hope that there will be progress toward improving relations after the meeting of the two countries' prime ministers in Davos. The spokesman said that Pakistan always felt that it is necessary for the improvement of relations between the two countries to resolve bilateral disputes, especially the Kashmir issue.

Nawaz Sharif Thanks Nation for Kashmir Solidarity

BK0602144492 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, has thanked the nation on the unprecedented display of complete solidarity with the people of Kashmir. Expressing his gratitude to the people of Pakistan and Kashmir who responded wholeheartedly to his call for demonstration of solidarity with the struggling Kashmiris yesterday, the prime minister said that the successful observance of the day shows the political awakening of the people and their commitment to freedom for all peoples of the world. He said that the people and the government of Pakistan would continue to extend all-out moral and political support to the people of occupied Kashmir who have been undergoing agonies and miseries at the hands of occupation forces. He said that history was a witness to the fact that people who rose for the right of self-determination could never be kept in chains for long.

Kashmir Leader Says Better Future With Pakistan

BK0702112892 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] The accession of Kashmir to Pakistan would ensure a better future for Kashmiris for which they have been endeavoring for the last half century. This was stated by President of Azad Kashmir Sardar Sikander Hayat Khan while addressing a gathering of Pakistanis and Kashmiris in [place name indistinct]. He said Kashmiris will never accept anything short of practicing their right of self determination as promised in the United Nations resolution. The Azad Kashmir president said the Kashmiris are very grateful to people and Government of Pakistan for their sincere support to the cause of Kashmir.